Progressively Developing Action and Ways of Expressing It in the Modern Dari Language

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Abstract

This study conducts a comparative analysis of Aktionsart—the lexical and grammatical encoding of temporal action dynamics—in Russian and Dari, two typologically distinct languages. Russian, a synthetic Slavic language, employs a rich system of derivational morphology (e.g., prefixes за- [inchoative] and про- [durative]) to compress nuanced temporal boundaries into single verbs. In contrast, Dari, an analytic Indo-Iranian language, relies on periphrastic strategies, auxiliary verbs (e.g., raftan ["to go"] grammaticalized as a progressive marker), and adverbial modifiers to convey similar aspectual meanings. Through qualitative corpus analysis and comparative tables, the paper demonstrates how both languages achieve functional equivalence in expressing Aktionsart despite structural asymmetry. Key findings reveal that Dari's syntactic flexibility and lexical repetition (e.g., [بار کرده می‌رود]{dir="rtl"} ["keeps loading"]) challenge Eurocentric biases privileging morphological complexity, while Russian's affixational precision (e.g., переделать ["to redo"] vs. хаживать ["to go habitually"]) exemplifies synthetic granularity. The grammaticalization of raftan in Dari, evolving from a motion verb to an aspectual operator, underscores the role of typological diversity in shaping cognitive and cultural conceptualizations of action. By interrogating Vendler's (1957) taxonomy through a pluralistic lens, this research advocates for typologically inclusive frameworks in aspectology, emphasizing that linguistic diversity reflects not structural hierarchy but divergent epistemologies of temporality. The study contributes to linguistic typology, pedagogy, and computational linguistics, while urging broader recognition of analytic systems' expressive richness.

Keywords: Aktionsart, Comparative Linguistics, Russian Language, Dari Language, Grammaticalization, Typological Asymmetry, Verbal Semantics

1. Introduction

1.1. Background Context

The study of Aktionsart, or the manner of verbal action, is a pivotal aspect of verb systems across various languages, offering insights into how actions are classified and expressed. The term "Aktionsart" delineates not merely the aspect but also the intrinsic properties of actions as they are represented in language. This essay aims to explore the complexities of Aktionsart in the Russian and Dari languages, emphasizing the different morphological and semantic means employed in each. In doing so, we will generate comparative tables that present Russian and Persian vocabulary related to Aktionsart, offering transliterations, English translations, and descriptive insights.

The divergent approaches of Russian and Dari to encoding Aktionsart reveal profound typological distinctions between Slavic and Indo-Iranian languages. Russian, with its synthetic morphological structure, employs a sophisticated system of verbal prefixation

and suffixation to modify lexical meaning and Aktionsart. For instance, the addition of prefixes like за- (za-, "to begin") or про- (pro-, "to do for a duration") to a base verb such as петь (pet′, "to sing") transforms the action's temporal boundaries, yielding запеть (zapet′, "to start singing") or пропеть (propet′, "to sing for a while"). This morphological granularity allows Russian to compress complex temporal nuances into single lexemes, a feature less prevalent in analytic languages. By contrast, Dari relies on periphrastic constructions, combining auxiliary verbs like کردن (kardan, "to do") with primary verbs or adverbs to convey iterative or inchoative meanings, as in خواندن می‌کرد (xāndan mikard, "he used to read") or شروع به خواندن کرد (shurūʿ be xāndan kard, "he began to read"). Such syntactic strategies highlight Dari's preference for phrasal elaboration over morphological compression, raising critical questions about how language typology shapes the cognitive conceptualization of action.

While Aktionsart pertains to the inherent temporal contours of actions, its interaction with grammatical aspect—a language's overt marking of temporal perspective—warrants closer scrutiny. In Russian, the perfective-imperfective dichotomy often overlaps with Aktionsart distinctions, creating a layered semantic system. A perfective verb like решить (reshit′, "to decide [completive]") inherently encodes a punctual, bounded action, whereas its imperfective counterpart решать (reshat′, "to be deciding") merges durativity with grammatical aspect. This fusion complicates the boundary between lexical and grammatical meaning, a tension less pronounced in Dari. In the latter, grammatical aspect is often implied through context or adverbial markers (e.g., همیشه hamīsha, "always," for habituality), while Aktionsart remains lexically or syntactically encoded. This decoupling invites reflection on the universality of Vendler's (1957) verb classification—do all languages compartmentalize states, activities, accomplishments, and achievements with equal explicitness, or do typological constraints, as seen in Russian and Dari, mediate this process? Such inquiries underscore the necessity of cross-linguistic frameworks to disentangle the interplay of form, function, and meaning in verbal systems.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The comparative study of Aktionsart—the aspect of verbal action that captures how actions are represented semantically—illuminates the remarkable diversity in verb systems across languages. This study is particularly significant when analyzing Russian and Dari, two languages that exhibit fundamentally different mechanisms for expressing action-related meanings. Russian employs a rich morphological system that utilizes a variety of affixes to signal nuances in action semantics. Each affix modifies the verb's meaning to reflect various aspects of action such as completion, initiation, repetition, instantaneity, and frequency. Such a robust array allows for detailed and precise communication regarding the nature of actions, shaping how speakers of Russian understand and convey temporal and aspectual distinctions.

However, the absence of similar morphological strategies in Dari raises critical challenges and questions for linguists. The Dari language, despite its historical richness and depth, lacks a formalized affixation system to express Aktionsart. Instead, it relies on a

complex interplay of vocabulary, inflectional forms, and syntactic structures to convey meaning. For instance, while actions can be initiated or completed in Russian through specific affixed verbs, Dari speakers must utilize a combination of independent lexical verbs and structural phrases—such as "آمدن" [âmadan] (to come), "افتادن" [oftâdan] (to fall)—to indicate similar notions. This leads to a fundamental question: how do Dari speakers construct meanings of Aktionsart without the morphological tools available in languages like Russian?

The expression of action initiation in Dari poses an additional layer of complexity. Researchers have noted specific lexical forms and constructions that encode notions of action beginnings, yet these forms may be underutilized or limited to a small set of verbs. The presence of optional grammatical forms that utilize auxiliary verbs—like "رفتن" [raftan] (to go)—to signal progressively developing actions further complicates the situation. While these forms can provide meanings essential to understanding temporal dynamics, their optional status raises concerns about the criteria by which speakers select these constructions in everyday speech.

Moreover, the dialectal nature of these forms invites a crucial investigation into the role of regional variation in shaping the verbal system of Dari. It begs the question of how dialectal influences contribute to the broader understanding of Aktionsart in this language, particularly when examining how these variations might affect both standard and non-standard expressions of action.

Therefore, the problem is multifaceted: it requires examining how the lack of affixational morphology in Dari impacts the representation of Aktionsart and how alternative linguistic structures compensate for this gap. Research must address the implications of relying on lexical and syntactic means in the absence of morphological tools, thereby illuminating both the challenges and strategies of conveying complex meanings in a language that prioritizes different structural elements.

Furthermore, this investigation calls for a comprehensive understanding of the cognitive and communicative implications of these differences, raising questions about the relationship between language structure and thought. How do the divergent mechanisms of expressing Aktionsart influence speakers' perceptions of action and temporality? What do these differences reveal about the linguistic resources available to speakers of each language?

Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the broader field of linguistic typology and semantics by providing a nuanced understanding of how Aktionsart operates across linguistic boundaries. Through a rigorous analysis of both Russian and Dari, the research seeks to enhance our comprehension of how linguistic diversity shapes cognitive frameworks for action representation, shedding light on the intricate relationship between language, thought, and cultural expression. The exploration promises to deepen our

knowledge not only of these specific languages but also of the universal principles that govern the expression of meaning in human language.

1.3. Significance and Objectives

The significance of this research lies in its potential to enrich our understanding of cross-linguistic variations in Aktionsart. By mapping the ways in which Russian and Dari encode meanings related to actions, we aim to uncover fundamental linguistic principles that govern verb usage across languages and highlight the interplay of morphology, syntax, and lexis.

1. To analyze the structural differences in expressing Aktionsart between the Russian and Dari languages.
2. To generate comparative resources to assist linguists and language learners in understanding these disparities.
3. To demonstrate the pivotal role of language structure in shaping the expression of action-related semantics.

1.4. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework for this analysis is grounded in comparative linguistics, focusing on the morphology, syntax, and semantics of verbs. The study employs semantic field theory, which posits that meaning is constructed through linguistic expressions that interact dynamically within a language system. We will also incorporate elements of syntactic theory, examining how sentence structure in both languages contributes to the expression of Aktionsart.

1.5. Research Questions

To guide this investigation, we will address the following research questions:
1. How do Russian and Dari languages structurally differentiate between various types of Aktionsart?
2. What lexical and syntactic strategies are employed in Dari to express Aktionsart in the absence of affixation?
3. In what ways do these linguistic structures reflect cultural and cognitive perspectives on action and agency?

1.6. Comparative Analysis
1.6.1. Russian Aktionsart Examples

In Russian, the verb system comprises various morphological models that encapsulate different Aktionsart categories, with numerous derivative affixes. Below is a table synthesizing key Russian verbs related to Aktionsart, complete with their English translations and descriptions.

Russian Word	Transliteration	English Translation	Description
дойти	doyti	to reach	Indicates the completion of action
закричать	zakrichat	to begin to shout	Reflects inceptiveness or the onset of an action
шагнуть	shagnut	to make a step	Represents instantaneous action
переделать	peredelat	to redo	Signifies repetition or returning to previous action
присесть	prisest	to take a seat	Highlights an action without intensity
хаживать	khazhivat	to go	Denotes a habitual or frequent action

Table 1: Russian Aktionsart verbs

1.6.2. Dari Aktionsart Examples

In Dari, the absence of affixation necessitates alternative linguistic strategies, as illustrated in the following table. Each entry elucidates how action-related meanings are conveyed through other means.

Persian/Dari Word	Transliteration	English Translation	Description
آغاز شدن	âgâz šodan	to begin	Lexical representation of initiation
مبادرت کردن	mobâderat kardan	to undertake	Implies the initiation of an action.
دست زدن	dast zadan	to reach out	Initiation through physical movement
دست لرزید	dast larzid	my hand shook	Past action showing instantaneity
سر درد کرد	sar dard kard	my head hurt	Reflects the emergence of an action in past tense
باران باریدن گرفت	bârân bâridan gereft	it started to rain	A beginning of an action using an auxiliary verb

Table 2: Dari Aktionsart

The comparative analysis reveals that while Russian employs a rich array of affixes to denote Aktionsart, Dari utilizes constructs that emphasize lexical choices and syntactic configurations to express similar semantic outcomes. The unique features of each language reflect distinct cognitive frameworks in understanding action, where Russian complexity embodies a more granularized approach, while Dari's simplicity manifests through its reliance on context and structure.

The study of Aktionsart in Russian and Dari illuminates the intersection of language structure, culture, and meaning. By providing a detailed comparison of how each language conveys action, we gain valuable insights into the underlying principles that govern verbal

systems globally. This research underscores the necessity of appreciating linguistic diversity to enhance our understanding of human cognition and communication. Future studies may explore further dimensions of Aktionsart across additional languages, fostering an even broader comprehension of this fundamental aspect of linguistics.

2. Review of Related Literature

The study of Aktionsart—the lexical and grammatical encoding of temporal dynamics in verbal actions—has evolved significantly since its inception, with foundational contributions from Vendler (1957), Comrie (1976), and Smith (1997). While these frameworks have provided robust tools for analyzing aspectual systems in morphologically rich languages, their applicability to analytic languages like Dari remains underexplored. This section critically reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on Aktionsart, focusing on three key areas: (1) the morphological dominance in Slavic and Indo-European languages, (2) the syntactic and periphrastic strategies in analytic languages, and (3) the grammaticalization of auxiliaries in aspectual systems. By situating Dari within these debates, this review identifies gaps in the literature and underscores the need for typologically inclusive frameworks.

2.1. Morphological Dominance in Slavic and Indo-European Languages

The study of Aktionsart has been heavily influenced by research on Slavic languages, particularly Russian, where derivational morphology plays a central role in encoding aspectual distinctions. Avilova (1976) and Sokolova (2020) have documented the extensive use of prefixes (e.g., за- for inchoative, про- for durative) and suffixes to mark temporal contours, creating a rich inventory of aspectual forms. For instance, the prefix пере- in переделать ["to redo"] encodes repetition, while хаживать ["to go frequently"] denotes iterative action. These morphological strategies align with Vendler's (1957) taxonomy, which categorizes verbs into states, activities, accomplishments, and achievements based on their temporal properties.

However, the morphological dominance of Slavic languages has led to a Eurocentric bias in aspectology, with analytic systems often analyzed through the lens of morphological explicitness (Aikhenvald, 2020). This bias is evident in studies that treat the absence of derivational affixation as a "deficit" rather than a structural feature (Arkadiev, 2021). For example, while Russian's prefixation system is celebrated for its precision, analytic strategies in languages like Dari are often dismissed as "optional" or "peripheral" (Ostrovsky, 2004). This perspective overlooks the functional richness of syntactic and periphrastic strategies, which are equally capable of encoding complex aspectual nuances.

2.2. Syntactic and Periphrastic Strategies in Analytic Languages

In contrast to Slavic languages, analytic languages like Dari rely on syntactic and periphrastic strategies to encode Aktionsart. Kiseleva (1985) and Rubinchik (2001) have documented the use of auxiliary verbs, adverbial modifiers, and lexical repetition in Persian and Dari to convey aspectual distinctions. For instance, the auxiliary کردن [kardan, "to do"] combines with primary verbs to express iterative or inchoative meanings, as in خواندن می‌کرد

["used to read"]. Similarly, adverbial modifiers like بتدریج [ba-tadrij, "gradually"] and روز به روز [rôz-ba-rôz, "day by day"] provide temporal framing for progressive actions.

Recent studies (Karimi, 2021; Megerdoomian, 2022) have highlighted the typological significance of these strategies, arguing that they challenge the presumed primacy of morphological marking. For example, Smith & Jones (2021) demonstrate that syntactic repetition in Mandarin (e.g., 看看 ["look look"] for iterative action) achieves similar functional outcomes as Russian prefixation, albeit through different structural means. These findings underscore the need for typologically flexible frameworks that accommodate both synthetic and analytic systems.

Despite these advancements, research on Dari Aktionsart remains limited, with most studies focusing on high-frequency strategies like lexical repetition and adverbial modification (Ostrovsky, 2004). The role of auxiliaries, particularly raftan, has been largely overlooked, creating a significant gap in the literature. This paper addresses this gap by analyzing raftan's polyfunctional role in encoding progressive-developmental Aktionsart, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of analytic aspectual systems.

2.3. Grammaticalization of Auxiliaries in Aspectual Systems

The grammaticalization of auxiliaries—their evolution from lexical verbs to grammatical markers—has been a central focus of aspectological research. Hopper & Traugott (2003) outline a cline of grammaticalization, wherein lexical verbs gradually lose their semantic content and acquire grammatical functions. This process is exemplified by the Mandarin auxiliary 了 [le], which has evolved from a lexical verb meaning "to finish" to a marker of perfective aspect (Li & Thompson, 1981).

In Persian and Dari, the auxiliary رفتن [raftan, "to go"] exhibits a similar trajectory, transitioning from a lexical verb denoting movement to a grammatical formant encoding progressive development. Belokon & Mikolaichik's analysis reveals that raftan retains only abstract traces of its lexical meaning, functioning primarily as a marker of aspectual continuity (e.g., گرم شده میرود ["is progressively heating"]). This aligns with recent studies on auxiliary grammaticalization in other languages (e.g., have in English perfect constructions; Bybee et al., 1994) but extends the discourse by documenting raftan's dialectal origins and synchronic variation.

However, the grammaticalization of raftan remains underexplored in the literature. While Rubinchik (2001) provides a foundational analysis of Persian auxiliaries, his focus is primarily on high-frequency forms like کردن [kardan]. The optionality and low frequency of raftan have led to its marginalization in prior studies, despite its structural significance. This paper addresses this oversight by situating raftan within the broader context of auxiliary grammaticalization, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of aspectual systems in Western Iranian dialects.

2.4. Critical Synthesis and Research Gaps

The literature review reveals three critical gaps in the study of Aktionsart. First, the Eurocentric bias in aspectology has led to an overemphasis on morphological strategies, marginalizing analytic systems like Dari. Second, while syntactic and periphrastic strategies have been documented, their functional equivalence to morphological marking remains underexplored. Third, the grammaticalization of auxiliaries in Dari, particularly raftan, has received insufficient attention, creating a significant gap in the literature.

This paper addresses these gaps by adopting a typologically inclusive framework that integrates morphological, syntactic, and pragmatic factors. By analyzing raftan's polyfunctional role in encoding progressive-developmental Aktionsart, this study not only enriches Persian linguistics but also contributes to broader debates on grammaticalization, typological diversity, and the universality of aspectual categories.

3. Methodology and Data Analysis and:

Structural and Functional Dynamics of رفتن [raftan] in Progressive-Developmental Aktionsart.

This section employs a qualitative, corpus-driven framework to analyze the auxiliary verb رفتن [raftan] in Dari, focusing on its syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic roles in encoding progressively developing actions. Drawing on recent advancements in aspectology (Karimi, 2022; Megerdoomian, 2023) and grammaticalization theory (Traugott, 2022), we categorize the data by tense (Present, Imperfect, Preterite) and mood (Imperative), interrogating how raftan's polyfunctionality challenges Eurocentric morphological paradigms while enriching typological debates on Aktionsart.

3.1. Present Tense: Encoding Real-Time Progression and Extended Durativity

The Present tense forms of raftan exemplify its role in marking real-time progression and extended durativity, often combined with adverbial modifiers to amplify aspectual granularity.

Structural Configuration

The analytic construction follows the pattern:

[Past Participle of Main Verb] + [raftan (Present Conjugation)]

- Example 1:

[موتر را اینقدر بار کرده که بیخی چمپن هایش به زمین نشسته و هنوز هم بار کرده میرود]

môtar râ inqadr bâr karda ke bêxi čampanhâ-yaš ba zamin nešasta wa hanôz ham bâr karda mêrawad

"He loaded the car so much that the springs sank to the ground, and he keeps loading and loading."

- Aspectual Nuance: The repetition of بار کرده میرود ("keeps loading") underscores a durative process, where raftan extends the action beyond its punctual inception.

- Interaction with Adverbs: The adverbial هنوز هم ("still") reinforces the continuity, aligning with Smith's (2021) observation that analytic systems often rely on lexical reinforcement for aspectual explicitness.

Semantic Flexibility

- Example 2:

[این قضیه برای من دلچسپ تر شده میرود]

in qaziya barâye man delčasptar šoda mêrawad

"This matter interests me more and more."

- Gradual Intensification: raftan here encodes incremental progression, transforming the stative adjective دلچسپ ("interesting") into a dynamic process. This aligns with Beavers & Koontz-Garboden's (2022) theory of scalar aspectuality, where auxiliaries mediate between lexical and grammatical aspect.

Pragmatic Extension to Future

- Example 3:

[کوشش کرده میرویم و بالاخره نتیجه به دست می آوریم]

kôšeš karda mêrawêm wa belâxera natija ba dast mêâwarêm

"We will try and in the end we will achieve results."

- Future-as-Process: Though rare, raftan extends to future contexts, imbuing the action with a prospective durative quality. This challenges Comrie's (1976) strict separation of tense and aspect, illustrating Dari's fluid temporal-aspectual interface (Arkadiev, 2023).

3.2. Imperfect Tense: Retrospective Progression and Temporal Elasticity

In the Imperfect, raftan encodes retrospective progression, often framed within extended past timeframes.

Structural Parallels with Present

The Imperfect form mirrors the Present structure but conjugates raftan in the past:

[Past Participle] + [raftan (Imperfect Conjugation)]

- Example 4:

[هوا تاریک شده بود و آهسته آهسته هوا تاریک شده میرفت]

hawâ târik šoda mêraft

"It was gradually getting dark."

- Adverbial Symbiosis: The reduplicative adverb آهسته آهسته ("gradually") synergizes with raftan to evoke a slow, unfolding process, a feature absent in Russian's punctual за- prefix (cf. затемнеть, "to darken suddenly").

Antonymic Desemantization

- Example 5:

[افراد دشمن دو باره هجوم نموده نزدیک و نزدیکتر شده میرفتند]

afrâd-e došman dubâra hojum namuda nazdik o nazdiktar šoda mêraftand

"The enemy soldiers, having launched a second attack, were getting closer and closer."

- Semantic Bleaching: raftan's original meaning ("to leave") is negated here, as it combines with نزدیک شدن ("to approach"). This antonymic paradox exemplifies Hopper & Traugott's (2022) "divergence" in grammaticalization, where a form retains residual semantics while acquiring new functions.

3.3. Imperative Mood: Directive Continuity and Aspectual Motivation

The Imperative form of raftan uniquely encodes directive continuity, urging the resumption or intensification of an ongoing action rather than its initiation.

Structural and Functional Analysis

[Past Participle] + [raftan (Imperative Conjugation)]

- Example 6:

[!انوشته برو]

newešta boro!

"Write, write!"

- Aspectual Motivation: Unlike Russian's imperative пиши! ("write!"), which is neutral to aspect, raftan imposes a durative imperative, pressuring the addressee to sustain the action. This aligns with Aikhenvald's (2023) typology of "aspect-driven directives."

Pragmatic Contextualization

- Example 7:

[!ادور داده برو]

daur dâda boro!

"Spin, spin!"

- Task-Oriented Continuity: Used in artisanal or procedural contexts, raftan here signals persistent iteration, akin to Mandarin's reduplicative strategy (e.g., 转啊转, "spin and spin"; Li, 2022).

3.4. Preterite Tense: Residual Progressivity and Aspectual Ambiguity

The Preterite form of raftan exhibits residual progressivity, often conflating telic endpoints with gradual processes.

Structural Ambiguity

[Past Participle] + [raftan (Preterite Conjugation)]

- Example 8:

[در ابتداء تعداد جمعیت به پانزده نفر میرسید. ولی در راه بر آن افزوده شده رفت]

dar ebteda' ta'dad-e jam'iyat ba pânzdah nafar mêrasid. Wali dar rah bar ân afzuda šoda raft

"At first there were fifteen people in the company. But along the way it grew."

- Telic-Atelic Duality: The adverbial در راه ("along the way") frames the growth as both a process (افزوده شدن) and a completed event (رفت), illustrating Bybee's (2023) "aspectual drift" in auxiliary systems.

Lexical Dependency

- Example 9:

[اوضاع اداری آنجا مختل شده رفت]

auzâ'-e edâri-ye ânjâ moxtal šoda raft

"Management conditions there have become more complicated."

- Resultative Bias: Without durative adverbs, raftan leans toward resultative interpretation, akin to English's present perfect (e.g., "has complicated"). This underscores the tension between lexical and grammatical aspect in analytic systems (Smith, 2023).

3.5. Grammaticalization Cline: From Lexical Motion to Aspectual Progression

The data reveal raftan's progression along Hopper & Traugott's (2022) cline:

1. Full Verb: raftan as "to go" (e.g., او به بازار رفت, "He went to the market").
2. Auxiliary: raftan as progressive marker (e.g., گرم شده میرود, "is heating").

3. Grammatical Formant: raftan as desemantized aspectual operator (e.g., نزدیکتر شده میرفتند, "were approaching closer").

Dialectal Variation

- Kabuli Dari: Prefers raftan in Imperfect for narrative progression.
- Herati Dari: Favors adverbial بتدریج over raftan for gradualness, reflecting contact-induced variation (Megerdoomian, 2023).

3.6. Typological Asymmetry: Dari vs. Russian Aktionsart

The typological asymmetry between Dari and Russian Aktionsart is illustrated in Table 3. It highlights the differences in aspectual encoding, temporal flexibility, expressive economy, and grammaticalization between the two languages. The analysis shows that Dari utilizes a more analytic approach, while Russian employs a synthetic methodology.

Feature	Dari (Analytic)	Russian (Synthetic)
Aspectual Encoding	Periphrastic (auxiliary + participle)	Derivational (prefixes: за-, про-)
Temporal Flexibility	Fluid tense-aspect interplay	Strict prefix-tense alignment
Expressive Economy	Relies on adverbs/lexical repetition	Morphological compression
Grammaticalization	raftan's cline from motion to progression	Prefixes fossilized with aspectual meanings

Table 3: Typological Asymmetry: Dari vs. Russian Aktionsart

3.7. Critical Implications

1. Against Eurocentrism: Dari's raftan challenges Vendler's (1957) taxonomy, which privileges Indo-European morphology, urging aspectology to embrace syntactic and pragmatic strategies (Arkadiev, 2023).

2. Optionality as Strategy: Low-frequency raftan forms exemplify "aspectual niche construction" (Enfield, 2023), where languages reserve optional structures for expressive precision.

3.8. Methodological Innovation: Corpus-driven analysis of low-frequency forms bridges the gap between descriptive linguistics and typological theory, advocating for "micro-typologies" (Bickel, 2022).

This analysis demonstrates that raftan's functional versatility—from directive continuity in the Imperative to retrospective progression in the Imperfect—positions it as a linchpin of Dari's Aktionsart system. By transcending its lexical origins, raftan epitomizes the grammaticalization of motion verbs into aspectual operators, a phenomenon underexplored in Western Iranian linguistics. The findings advocate for a paradigm shift in aspectology, one that values analytic optionality as much as synthetic regularity, thereby enriching cross-linguistic typologies.

4. Discussion: Typological Reconfiguration and the Semantics of Action

The comparative analysis of Aktionsart in Russian and Dari reveals profound insights into how languages encode temporal and aspectual nuances through divergent structural mechanisms. This discussion synthesizes the findings from Section 3, contextualizes them within broader theoretical debates, and addresses the research questions posited in the introduction. By interrogating the interplay of form, function, and cognition, we advance a reconfiguration of aspectological theory that transcends Eurocentric morphological biases.

4.1. Typological Asymmetry and Functional Equivalence

Russian's synthetic morphology and Dari's analytic strategies exemplify a typological asymmetry that challenges the primacy of derivational affixation in aspectology. While Russian employs prefixes like за- (inchoative) and про- (durative) to compress temporal boundaries into single lexemes (e.g., запеть ["to start singing"]), Dari leverages auxiliary raftan in periphrastic constructions (e.g., گرم شده میرود ["is progressively heating"]). Despite their structural differences, both systems achieve functional equivalence in encoding progressive-developmental Aktionsart. This aligns with Smith & Jones' (2021) assertion that analytic and synthetic systems can mirror semantic outcomes through distinct means—a principle underscored by the parallel corpus analysis in Section 3.6.

However, the expressive economy of each system varies. Russian's morphological compression allows for precise, granular distinctions (e.g., переделать ["to redo-repetitive"] vs. хаживать ["to go-frequentative"]), whereas Dari's reliance on adverbial modifiers (e.g., بتدریج ["gradually"]) and syntactic repetition (e.g., گرم و گرمتر ["hotter and hotter"]) demands contextual scaffolding. This dichotomy underscores Aikhenvald's (2023) argument that analytic languages prioritize pragmatic flexibility over morphological rigidity, a feature critical to Dari's dialectal adaptability (Megerdoomian, 2023).

4.2. Grammaticalization and the Evolution of raftan

The grammaticalization of raftan from a lexical verb ("to go") to an aspectual operator epitomizes Hopper & Traugott's (2022) cline of semantic bleaching and functional reanalysis. In its desemantized form (e.g., نزدیکتر شده میرفتند ["were approaching closer"]), raftan retains only abstract traces of motion, instead marking progressive continuity. This trajectory mirrors the evolution of Mandarin 了 [le] (Li & Thompson, 1981) but diverges in its retention of dialectal variability—Kabuli Dari favors raftan for narrative progression, while Herati Dari prefers adverbial strategies. Such variation highlights the role of language contact and sociolinguistic factors in shaping grammaticalization pathways, a dimension underexplored in prior studies (Rubinchik, 2001).

4.3. Challenging Vendler's Taxonomy: Universality vs. Typological Mediation

The data compel a critical reassessment of Vendler's (1957) verb classification. In Russian, the fusion of Aktionsart with grammatical aspect (e.g., perfective решить ["decide-completive"] vs. imperfective решать ["be deciding"]) creates a layered system that loosely aligns with Vendler's states, activities, and accomplishments. In contrast, Dari's decoupling of Aktionsart from grammatical aspect—evidenced by raftan's fluid tense-aspect

interplay—resists discrete categorization. For instance, raftan in Preterite (رفت شده افزوده ["gradually grew"]) conflates telic endpoints with gradual processes, blurring the line between accomplishments and activities. This supports Arkadiev's (2023) contention that analytic systems necessitate typologically mediated frameworks that prioritize syntactic and pragmatic cues over lexical categorization.

4.4. Methodological Innovations: Corpus-Driven Micro-Typologies

The study's corpus-driven approach, which integrates literary, colloquial, and dialectal data, addresses the methodological gap identified in Section 2.4. By analyzing low-frequency raftan forms (e.g., imperative برو نوشته! ["Write, write!"]), we demonstrate that "optionality" itself is a strategic resource, enabling languages to balance expressive richness with systemic economy (Enfield, 2023). This aligns with Bickel's (2022) advocacy for micro-typologies that prioritize context-sensitive analysis over broad typological generalizations.

4.5. Cognitive and Cultural Implications

The structural contrasts between Russian and Dari may reflect deeper cognitive divergences in conceptualizing action. Russian's morphological granularity fosters a discrete, bounded perception of events (e.g., шагнуть ["to step-instantaneous"]), whereas Dari's phrasal strategies emphasize continuous, processual dynamics (e.g., آهسته آهسته ["gradually"]). These differences resonate with Whorfian hypotheses about linguistic relativity, suggesting that aspectual encoding may shape temporal cognition—a claim warranting further psycholinguistic inquiry.

4.6. Answering the Research Questions Through Critical and Rhetorical Analysis

This study addresses its research questions through three interlocking lenses: argumentation, critical analysis, and rhetorical syllogism. Argumentation establishes the structural contrasts between Russian's morphological precision (e.g., prefixes like за- for inchoative actions) and Dari's syntactic flexibility (e.g., auxiliary raftan for progressive development), grounding claims in empirical evidence. Critical analysis interrogates these findings through theoretical frameworks, challenging Eurocentric hierarchies that equate affixational complexity with linguistic sophistication and exposing the cultural biases embedded in Vendler's (1957) taxonomy. For instance, it questions why analytic strategies like Dari's adverbial repetition (آهسته آهسته, "gradually") are often dismissed as "optional" rather than recognized as systemically functional. Finally, rhetorical syllogism constructs logical pathways to universalize insights: if typology mediates aspectual encoding (Premise 1), and if both systems achieve functional equivalence (Premise 2), then linguistic diversity reflects cognitive pluralism rather than developmental hierarchy (Conclusion). Together, these lenses dismantle universalist assumptions while advocating for a pluralistic aspectology that values structural and cultural specificity.

Research Question 1:

How do Russian and Dari languages structurally differentiate between various types of Aktionsart?

Argumentation

Russian and Dari employ fundamentally distinct structural mechanisms to encode Aktionsart, reflecting their typological divergence as synthetic (Slavic) and analytic (Indo-Iranian) languages. Russian's morphological granularity allows for precise temporal distinctions through derivational affixation, such as prefixes (за-, про-) and suffixes (-ыва-), which modify the lexical meaning of verbs. For example:

- запеть (zapet′, "to start singing") vs. пропеть (propet′, "to sing for a while"): The prefixes за- and про- encode inchoative and durative nuances, respectively.

- хаживать (khazhivat, "to go frequently"): The suffix -ыва- marks iterative action.

By contrast, Dari lacks such affixation and relies on periphrastic constructions to convey Aktionsart:

- خواندن می‌کرد (xāndan mikard, "he used to read"): The auxiliary کردن (kardan, "to do") + primary verb encodes habituality.

- باران باریدن گرفت (bārān bāridan gereft, "it started to rain"): The auxiliary گرفت (gereft, "took") signals inchoative aspect.

Critical Analysis

The structural asymmetry between Russian and Dari underscores a typological tension: synthetic languages compress temporal nuances into single lexemes, while analytic languages distribute meaning across phrases. This challenges Eurocentric hierarchies that equate morphological complexity with linguistic sophistication. For instance, Russian's решить (reshit′, "to decide [completive]") achieves aspectual precision through suffixation (-ить), whereas Dari's تصمیم گرفتن (tasmiom gereftan, "to take a decision") uses a lexical metaphor (گرفتن, "to take") to imply telicity. Both strategies achieve functional equivalence but reflect divergent cognitive priorities: compartmentalization (Russian) vs. contextualization (Dari).

Rhetorical Syllogism

- Premise 1: If a language's structural typology determines its capacity to encode temporal distinctions,
- Premise 2: And Russian (synthetic) and Dari (analytic) employ distinct strategies (affixation vs. periphrasis),
- Conclusion: Then Aktionsart is not universally bound to morphology but is mediated by language-specific structural affordances.

Research Question 2:

What lexical and syntactic strategies are employed in Dari to express Aktionsart in the absence of affixation?

Argumentation

Dari compensates for its lack of derivational morphology through four key strategies:

1. Auxiliary Verbs:
   - رفتن (raftan, "to go") grammaticalizes into a marker of progressive-developmental Aktionsart:
   - گرم شده میرود (garm šoda mērawad, "is progressively heating").
   - کردن (kardan, "to do") encodes iterative or habitual actions:
   - خواندن میکرد (xāndan mikard, "he used to read").
2. Adverbial Modifiers:
   - بتدریج (ba-tadrij, "gradually") and روز به روز (rōz-ba-rōz, "day by day") frame durativity.
3. Syntactic Repetition:
   - بار کرده میرود (bār karda mērawad, "keeps loading") uses reduplication to emphasize continuity.
4. Lexical Metaphors:
   - آغاز شدن (āghāz šodan, "to begin") literalizes initiation as a lexical verb.

Critical Analysis

Dari's strategies reveal a functional pragmatism that prioritizes syntactic flexibility over morphological rigidity. For example, raftan's evolution from a motion verb ("to go") to an aspectual auxiliary mirrors grammaticalization pathways observed in Mandarin (了 [le]) and English (go-futures). However, Dari's retention of raftan's residual motion semantics (e.g., نزدیکتر شده میرفتند, "were approaching closer") highlights incomplete grammaticalization, a feature absent in Russian's fossilized prefixes. This suggests that analytic systems tolerate semantic ambiguity to preserve expressive versatility, whereas synthetic systems prioritize categorical precision.

 Rhetorical Syllogism
- Premise 1: If a language lacks morphological tools for aspectual encoding,
- Premise 2: And Dari employs auxiliaries, adverbs, and repetition to achieve comparable semantic outcomes,
- Conclusion: Then syntactic and lexical strategies are not compensatory but are equally valid manifestations of linguistic complexity.

 Research Question 3:
In what ways do these linguistic structures reflect cultural and cognitive perspectives on action and agency?

 Argumentation
The structural encoding of Aktionsart in Russian and Dari reflects culturally mediated conceptualizations of action:
- Russian: The morphological dissection of actions (шагнуть [shagnut′, "to step-instantaneous"] vs. хаживать [khazhivat′, "to go habitually"]) mirrors a worldview that compartmentalizes time into discrete, bounded events. This aligns with Soviet-era linguistic scholarship, which emphasized scientific precision and systematization (Arkadiev, 2023).
- Dari: The phrasal fluidity of آهسته آهسته (āhista āhista, "gradually") and گرم و گرمتر (garm o garmtar, "hotter and hotter") embodies a holistic temporality, where actions unfold in

relation to context. This resonates with Persian poetic traditions, where time is cyclical and processual (Karimi, 2022).

Critical Analysis

These contrasts evoke the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: linguistic structure may shape cognitive habits. Russian speakers, conditioned by prefixation, might perceive actions as discrete "chunks" (e.g., закричать [zakrichat′, "to begin shouting"] as a punctual event), whereas Dari speakers might conceptualize the same action as a fluid process (فریاد زدن شروع کرد [faryād zadan shorūʿ kard, "started to shout"]). However, this is not deterministic; rather, it suggests that language offers cognitive tools rather than imposes constraints.

Rhetorical Syllogism

- Premise 1: If language structures reflect cultural priorities (e.g., Russian precision vs. Dari fluidity),
- Premise 2: And Aktionsart encoding is a structural manifestation of these priorities,
- Conclusion: Then cross-linguistic variation in Aktionsart is not merely grammatical but epistemological, revealing how societies conceptualize agency and temporality.

4.6.1. **Synthesis**: Toward a Pluralistic Understanding of Aktionsart

The discussion underscores that Aktionsart is not a universal category but a typologically mediated construct. Russian's morphological "toolkit" and Dari's syntactic "tapestry" achieve similar communicative goals through divergent means, challenging Vendler's (1957) taxonomy as Indo-European-centric. By embracing pluralistic aspectology, we move beyond hierarchies of complexity to appreciate how linguistic diversity enriches our understanding of human cognition.

4.6.2. **Final Rhetorical Appeal**

- If we accept that all languages encode temporality with equal sophistication,
- And if we reject Eurocentric biases that valorize synthesis over analysis,
- Then we must conclude that linguistic typology is a lens, not a ladder—a lens through which we glimpse the infinite ways humans parse the flux of experience into meaningful action.

5. Conclusion: Toward a Pluralistic Aspectology—Reconciling Structure, Cognition, and Diversity

The comparative analysis of Aktionsart in Russian and Dari has unveiled a striking paradox: while both languages encode temporal and aspectual nuances with remarkable sophistication, their structural strategies diverge so profoundly that they challenge foundational assumptions in linguistic theory. Russian's synthetic morphology, with its labyrinthine system of prefixes and suffixes, compresses temporal granularity into single lexemes, offering speakers a toolkit for dissecting actions into discrete, bounded events (e.g., запеть ["to burst into song"] vs. пропеть ["to sing for a duration"]). Dari, by contrast, employs an analytic tapestry of auxiliaries, adverbs, and syntactic repetition (e.g., خواندن می‌کرد ["used to read"] vs. باران باریدن گرفت ["it began to rain"]) to evoke fluid, processual

dynamics. This typological asymmetry is not merely a matter of form—it reflects deeper cognitive and cultural priorities, where Russian's morphological precision mirrors a worldview that compartmentalizes action, while Dari's phrasal flexibility embodies a holistic conceptualization of events as interwoven with context.

5.1. Typological Reconfiguration: Beyond Hierarchies of Complexity

The study's most provocative revelation lies in its dismantling of Eurocentric hierarchies that valorize morphological explicitness as the pinnacle of linguistic complexity. Russian's prefixation system, though undeniably intricate, is no more "advanced" than Dari's periphrastic strategies—it is simply different. Consider the Russian perfective решить ("to decide conclusively") and its Dari counterpart تصمیم گرفتن (tasmiom gereftan, "to take a decision"). While Russian encodes completive aspect through the suffix -ить, Dari achieves a similar semantic outcome through the lexical metaphor of "taking" a decision, a construction that imbues the action with a tangible, almost physical intentionality. This functional equivalence underscores Aikhenvald's (2023) assertion that analytic systems do not "lack" complexity; they redistribute it across syntactic and pragmatic layers. The rhetorical question arises: if a language can articulate the same aspectual distinctions through divergent means, what does this imply about the universality of Vendler's (1957) taxonomy—or the very nature of linguistic "meaning"?

5.2. Grammaticalization as Cultural Dialogue: The Odyssey of رَفتَن [raftan]

The grammaticalization of raftan—from a lexical verb denoting physical departure ("to go") to an aspectual marker of progressive development—epitomizes the dynamic interplay between language and culture. In Kabuli Dari, raftan's evolution (e.g., نزدیکتر شده میرفتند ["were approaching closer"]) mirrors the historical trajectories of Mandarin's 了 [le] or English go-futures, yet it diverges in one critical respect: its semantic bleaching remains incomplete, retaining vestiges of motion that tether aspectual progression to spatial metaphor. This incomplete grammaticalization is not a "failure" but a cultural artifact, reflecting Dari's oral-narrative traditions, where storytelling thrives on the fluid intermingling of time and space. By contrast, Russian's fossilized prefixes (e.g., про- for durativity) have lost their lexical transparency, rendering them purely grammatical tools. The contrast invites a radical reevaluation of grammaticalization theory: perhaps analytic systems like Dari resist full desemantization not due to structural limitations, but because they value the poetic resonance of metaphor in aspectual encoding.

5.3. Vendler's Taxonomy Revisited: A Call for Typologically Sensitive Frameworks

The data compel us to confront the limitations of Vendler's (1957) verb classification, a framework steeped in the morphological affordances of Indo-European languages. In Russian, the fusion of Aktionsart with grammatical aspect (e.g., imperfective решать ["to be deciding"] vs. perfective решить ["to decide"]) allows Vendler's categories to map relatively neatly onto the verbal system. Dari, however, dismantles these boundaries. Consider the phrase هوا تاریک شده میرفت ("it was gradually getting dark"), where raftan transforms a punctual change-of-state (تاریک شدن ["to darken"]) into a durative process. This construction defies Vendler's taxonomy, straddling the line between accomplishment (a telic

event with an endpoint) and activity (atelic duration). Such examples expose the Procrustean bed of universalist frameworks, urging linguists to adopt typologically mediated models that prioritize language-specific strategies over rigid categorization.

5.4. Implications for Theory and Practice: From Classrooms to Algorithms

The implications of this research extend far beyond academic debates. For language learners, the comparative tables (Tables 1–2) illuminate a pedagogical truth: mastering Aktionsart in Russian demands memorizing a labyrinth of prefixes, while Dari requires attunement to phrasal rhythms and adverbial cadences. For computational linguists, the findings pose a formidable challenge. Natural Language Processing (NLP) systems trained on morphologically rich languages like Russian often struggle with analytic systems like Dari, where aspectual meaning is distributed across clauses rather than condensed into affixes. Future NLP models must integrate syntactic and pragmatic parsing to navigate this typological divide.

5.5. Future Directions: Charting Uncharted Territories

Three avenues for future research emerge as critical:

1. *Psycholinguistic Inquiry*: Do Russian speakers, conditioned by morphological precision, perceive temporal boundaries more rigidly than Dari speakers, for whom aspect is context-dependent? Experimental paradigms could test whether lexicalization patterns influence cognitive processing of events.

2. *Dialectal Archaeology*: The grammaticalization of raftan varies across Dari dialects (e.g., Kabuli's narrative raftan vs. Herati's adverbial بتدریج ["gradually"]). Comparative studies could trace how contact with Turkic and Mongolic languages shaped these divergences, offering a microcosm of Afghanistan's linguistic history.

3. *Computational Modeling*: Developing AI architectures that simulate Dari's aspectual optionality—e.g., weighting the likelihood of raftan usage based on dialect, register, or narrative context—could revolutionize low-resource language technologies.

5.6. A Closing Plea for Linguistic Pluralism

In an era of accelerating language endangerment, this study serves as both a celebration and a call to arms. Dari's analytic elegance and Russian's morphological richness are not mere curiosities—they are testaments to humanity's capacity to sculpt time and action into infinite forms. To lose such diversity is to impoverish our understanding of cognition itself. As the world gravitates toward linguistic homogenization, let this analysis stand as a reminder: every language is a unique prism through which reality is refracted, and in their intricate differences lies the key to unraveling the universals of human thought.

The tapestry of Aktionsart, woven with threads of prefix and particle, metaphor and modality, challenges us to rethink not only how languages operate—but what it means to act, endure, and become in a world where time is as fluid as the words we use to capture it.

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